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Report of the Peacebuilding Commission

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Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), in which the Peacebuilding Commission was requested to submit an annual report to the Assembly for an annual debate and review. Pursuant to Council resolution 1646 (2005), the report will also be submitted to the Council for an annual debate. The present report covers the sixth session of the Commission, held from 1 January to 31 December 2012.

2. On 29 October 2010, the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted resolutions 65/7 and 1947 (2010) respectively, through which the two organs, inter alia, requested the Commission to reflect in its annual reports the progress made in taking forward the relevant recommendations contained in the report presented in 2010 by the co-facilitators on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (A/64/868-S/2010/393, annex).

3. The present report uses a new format for reporting on progress in taking forward the recommendations of the 2010 review, organized around the main functions and work of the Peacebuilding Commission and placing particular emphasis on the results achieved and the challenges and opportunities related to the impact of the Commission in the field and its relations at United Nations Headquarters. In doing so, the report draws on relevant country-specific examples to reinforce the analysis. A list of activities undertaken by the various configurations will be made available in a separate document which will be posted on the website of the Commission (www.un.org/en/peacebuilding)

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II. Work of the Peacebuilding Commission

A. Overview of main issues and challenges

4. The reporting period witnessed developments in countries on the agenda that highlighted the potential but also the limitations of the Commission. The Commission provided support for the launching of a national reconciliation strategy in Liberia, the successful conduct of elections in Sierra Leone and resource mobilization in support of a new poverty reduction strategy in Burundi. In doing so, the Commission reaffirmed the centrality of strong national ownership at the core of peacebuilding. The support provided by the Commission to these processes would have not been sufficiently effective if national actors in the respective countries had not demonstrated sufficient leadership and commitment. Conversely, the disruption of the presidential electoral process through an unconstitutional change of government in Guinea-Bissau on 12 April undermined the progress in peacebuilding that had begun to take place in that country. This development underlined the fact that the role of the Commission in political accompaniment is limited in the absence of broader, more vigorous and continuing national commitment and efforts to address the root causes of instability.

5. Meanwhile, in pursuance of the road map for actions in 2012, which is designed to take forward relevant recommendations from the 2010 review, the work undertaken by the Commission on policy development has prioritized resource mobilization and partnerships as an area where the Commission is expected to prove its added value at the country level. Thus the work of the Commission has focused on supporting national aid coordination and resource mobilization efforts, as well as strengthening the partnership with the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

6. During the reporting period, the Commission sought to deepen its working relationship with key United Nations actors in the field, especially the senior leadership. Supported by the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Department of Political Affairs, a meeting of members of the Chairs Group and the senior United Nations leadership in the countries on the agenda of the Commission was held in May to discuss the mutual expectations of the two sides and to explore areas of complementarity in their work. This work is closely linked yet runs parallel to efforts aimed at fostering deeper relations with the Security Council and articulating more widely the value added by the Commission in specific country situations. Each of these relationships deserves the continuing attention of the Commission as it seeks to add value to the work of United Nations field-based actors in supporting peacebuilding processes. Further focus on the practical elements of the partnerships with the international financial institutions, the private sector, foundations and regional, subregional and non-governmental organizations will help to support the efforts of the Commission to strengthen its linkages with operational and field-based actors and will reinforce its role in fostering coherence among them.

7. The role of the Commission in support of national capacity development has been the subject of interaction between the Organizational Committee and the Chair of the Steering Committee on Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict during the reporting period. Members expect the Commission to offer a platform that fosters direct exchange of experiences between countries on the agenda and other countries that have undergone a successful transition from conflict to development.

Building on the high-level meeting in 2011 on the topic "Post-conflict peacebuilding: the experience of Rwanda", the Commission can serve as a forum to draw on the national experiences of its membership in support of a demand-driven approach to capacity development for peacebuilding in the countries on its agenda, with particular attention to facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation.

8. In this regard, the full potential of the unique membership structure of the Commission and its nature as a political platform made up of the most influential global actors is yet to be realized. The 2010 review noted that the lack of strong political support from capitals was one reason for a less effective impact of the Commission in the field. To this end, the high-level event in September 2012 on the topic "Peacebuilding: the way towards sustainable peace and security", organized at the initiative of the current Chair (Bangladesh), aimed to engage member States at the highest policymaking level from capitals. Chaired by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, the event was attended by heads of State and Government, ministers, heads of delegations and representatives of private sectors and civil society. The Secretary-General also addressed the event. Through the consensus declaration adopted at the event, the Commission has been able to draw attention to and reaffirm the commitment of its broader membership to the key principles, objectives and priorities which it has consistently promoted, at both the policy and country-specific levels. In this regard, the declaration highlighted the centrality of sustainable peace and security through a coherent and coordinated response, the need to ensure national ownership, inclusive national processes, gender mainstreaming, youth employment and job creation, the marshalling of adequate resources for peacebuilding and the sharing of experiences and lessons learned, in particular through South-South and triangular cooperation. However, the Commission recognizes the need for a systematic follow-up of the event by demonstrating the relevance of the Commission to capital-based officials and so increasing their engagement.

9. The Commission attaches particular importance to developing its relations with the principal organs of the United Nations. Strengthening relations with the Security Council was given high priority during the reporting period in view of the fact that five of the six countries on the agenda of the Commission have been referred through the Council. The consideration by the Council in July of the report of the Commission on its fifth session offered an opportunity to delve deeper into the proposition made in the 2010 review that the potential exists to create a new dynamic between a more forthcoming Security Council and a better performing Commission. A key entry point for building the relationship is for the Council to clearly articulate its expectations to the Commission and ensuring that the Commission can live up to these expectations and demonstrate added value. These issues were extensively deliberated upon during the debate of the Council on the report of the Commission and during the informal interactive dialogue, of 12 and 13 July respectively, and were further explored in the meeting of the Working Group on Lessons Learned on 21 November. There are encouraging signs that the Council has given practical effect to these issues. For example, the Council requested the Chairs of the country configurations on Liberia and Sierra Leone to brief the Council in the context of the mandate renewal of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) in September. In response, the Commission provided an analytical perspective on and outlined the specific areas around which its support to

Liberia and Sierra Leone is being structured. Such clarity should help the Council in assessing progress towards meeting critical peacebuilding-related targets in both countries ahead of its consideration of the nature and pace of the transition of UNMIL and UNIPSIL respectively. Earlier, the Burundi configuration sought to put its advisory role into effect in a letter addressed to the President of the Security Council reporting on the results of a visit to Burundi by its Chair in April (see A/66/801-S/2012/320).

B. Resource mobilization, partnerships and advocacy

Resource mobilization

10. The Commission has continued to intensify its efforts to fulfil its function relating to mobilization of resources. In response to an increasing demand for the identification of practical approaches to this function commensurate with the nature of the Commission as an intergovernmental body, the Peacebuilding Support Office submitted a paper in July presenting a list of options and opportunities for the Commission to perform this crucial function. The policy discussions led by the Organizational Committee in July and October explored ways to redefine the role of the Commission and manage the expectations of the countries on its agenda and other actors. One outgrowth of the discussion was a general acknowledgement of the need to map resource flows as a tool which could help in identifying gaps and stimulating the development of effective national aid management and coordination systems. Other areas identified included the support of the Commission for the organization of donor conferences and engagement with other donors, such as foundations and philanthropic organizations.

11. In response to the acknowledgement of the need to identify gaps, drawing on the outcome of the first periodic review of the statement of mutual commitments for peacebuilding in Guinea the Working Group on Lessons Learned (Japan) and the Guinea configuration (Luxembourg), together with the authorities of Guinea, have conducted a mapping exercise with a view to identifying relevant actors and programmes, as well as overlaps and gaps in funding and capacities. The exercise was also aimed at supporting the establishment of an aid information and management system which would allow the Government of Guinea to have greater predictability of international support to peacebuilding and, if applicable, the wider development framework. As an initial result of this exercise, the information on countries and institutions that are funding key peacebuilding priorities in Guinea has been updated. However, the Working Group noted the difficulty of securing reliable and up-to-date information and encouraged the Commission to advocate with donors for accurate and frequent reporting of aid flows and to assist the country in devising a resource mobilization strategy, which would allow the Government to assess and prioritize its national resource mobilization efforts. Going forward, further analysis of the financing gaps and of the opportunities to reinforce coordination mechanisms in Guinea should be the focus of a follow-up phase to this pilot mapping exercise. This will also help to better programme the next phase of projects supported by the Peacebuilding Fund, ensuring coherence with projects funded by other partners. The Guinea configuration should also continue exploring the integration of peacebuilding and development objectives, following a similar approach to the one taken by the Burundi, Central African Republic and Sierra Leone configurations, notably in view of the preparation of the next poverty reduction strategy framework

in the country. Such integration would help to strengthen national ownership, as well as the alignment of the support from partners behind national priorities for peacebuilding and development.

12. At the Burundi partners conference, which took place in Geneva on 29 and 30 October, partners pledged more than $2.5 billion to support the new poverty reduction strategy for Burundi for the period 2013-2016. Such an expression of commitment went beyond the expectation of the Government of Burundi of mobilizing $1 billion. In addition, the Geneva conference witnessed the expansion of the donor base for Burundi. New and emerging partners, including Member States, foundations and development funds, have joined traditional donors in expressing support for Burundi. This development, in particular, was the result of intensive advocacy work undertaken by the Chair of the configuration (Switzerland) during the six to nine months that preceded the conference. The Burundi partners conference not only resulted in resource mobilization and the expansion of the donor base, it also offered an opportunity for policy dialogue between Burundi and its partners which shed light on outstanding peacebuilding issues in the country and helped to renew the engagement of key partners around these issues. The outcome of the Geneva conference testifies to the importance of the countries concerned demonstrating the seriousness and ownership of ongoing and long-term peacebuilding efforts.

13. By contrast, the advances made in Guinea-Bissau in 2011 with donors willing to contribute to strengthening national institutions responsible for combating drug trafficking and to establishing a military pension fund were swiftly suspended in the aftermath of the unconstitutional change of government which took place in April 2012. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and several other bilateral and multilateral partners, including the Peacebuilding Fund, have indefinitely suspended their activities in the country as a result.

14. While ownership is a critical success factor for resource mobilization, the Commission has also realized that coordination of efforts and messages from and to the Governments concerned are crucial. In the case of the Central African Republic, and at the partners round table co-organized and hosted by the Commission and the Government of Belgium in June 2011, partners expressed the need for a follow-up meeting in 2012. However, efforts towards holding such a meeting were not entirely coordinated with the Commission and other key partners, and while these efforts led to an important thematic discussion by the Friends of the Central African Republic on the needs of the country, including financial needs, in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in April 2012, it did not result in the kind of financial support the country was expecting. The key national and international partners had a common analysis of the situation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, including security sector reform, but had different opinions regarding the appropriate timing and context of the meeting, resulting in contradictory opinions on the likelihood of success of a partners meeting aimed at mobilizing resources for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. In contrast, a more timely and coordinated approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the country, when positive developments at the country level had been successfully communicated to key partners, allowed for mobilizing additional funds for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, including from the Peacebuilding Fund.

15. The lessons learned from the experience of the Commission in support of the Central African Republic and Burundi in organizing donor and partner conferences and in advocating with donors to fund national peace consolidation and development strategies may prove useful if the Commission is requested to remain engaged in and to help mobilize funding for the next poverty reduction strategy for Sierra Leone in 2013. The scope of the role of the Commission in resource mobilization in the case of Sierra Leone, however, could expand further. Subsequent to the November 2012 elections in Sierra Leone, the Security Council requested the Commission to continue to provide support to the country in this area, as well as in the coordination of international development efforts.

16. In Liberia, a resource mobilization strategy has been evolving during the second half of 2012. The main objective of the draft strategy is to maximize the potential of the Commission to mobilize resources for some agreed peacebuilding priorities and to support the Government of Liberia in its own efforts to mobilize resources. The strategy is based on supporting the efforts within existing Liberian coordination mechanisms such as the annual workplan for the justice and security programme and the justice and security trust fund, and coordinated efforts to support the implementation of the national reconciliation road map. Through the strategy, the Commission intends to build on the investment of the Peacebuilding Fund, while drawing in additional donors and encouraging partners to step up their efforts.

Partnerships

17. Promoting partnerships in support of peacebuilding is one of the priorities of the Commission. In this effort, the Commission has accorded special emphasis to building partnerships with international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank and AfDB, and with other actors such as private corporations, foundations and philanthropic organizations.

18. The partnership with the World Bank and AfDB was conceived on the basis of complementarity between the roles of the international financial institutions and the Commission in support of national strategies and priorities at the country level, and around key peacebuilding-related themes.

19. With a view to deepening the partnership between the Commission and the World Bank, the Chairs Group visited Washington, D.C., on 13 September to hold a dialogue with the senior officials and executive directors of the World Bank, during which it was emphasized that a potential area of complementarity could manifest itself in the process of developing poverty reduction strategies in countries on the agenda of the Commission. In the strategies that have been developed in the Central African Republic and Burundi in 2011 and 2012 respectively, critical peacebuilding priorities were highlighted with a view to ensuring sustained focus and commitment from the Governments concerned and their international partners. In this connection, the dialogue has underlined the importance of engagement by the World Bank in the country-level consultations leading to the design of the Peacebuilding Commission instruments of engagement. Such engagement will help in aligning these instruments with the country assistance strategies of the World Bank. It was also emphasized that programmes designed to foster an enabling political environment, for example, in areas such as political dialogue and reconciliation represent possible entry points for the Commission and can be complementary to the engagement of

the World Bank in countries on the agenda. Going forward, therefore, there is a clear need for sustaining a dialogue with the World Bank executive directors and senior management at the policy level, which could be significant as the Commission seeks to develop the conceptual framework for the partnership. In addition and drawing on country-specific experience, the World Bank, the United Nations in-country presence and the Commission could identify specific examples of collaboration that could be further scaled up and broadened.

20. As a follow-up to the visit of the Chairs Group in 2011, the partnership with AfDB is proceeding, also on the basis of identifying areas of complementarity at the country level. Through the Peacebuilding Support Office, the process of developing the AfDB country strategy paper for the Central African Republic in support of the new country poverty reduction strategy is being closely coordinated with the Commission, in particular through an analysis of the key peacebuilding priorities, challenges and opportunities for peace dividends in the country. It has been further agreed that the Commission and AfDB need to identify pilot countries on the agenda where the two institutions could undertake joint initiatives in the area of job creation in collaboration with other United Nations implementing agencies. A joint field mission to Guinea to explore ways for the Global Facility on Employment Creation in Fragile Situations to assist with generation of employment for young people is being explored for 2013. Such a joint mission would be linked with the study which the Government of Guinea and the United Nations have initiated on opportunities for employment for young people and women. In Liberia, AfDB and the Commission have agreed to collaborate in the process of the development of the upcoming AfDB country strategy paper for the period 2013-2017 and the second review of the statement of mutual commitments for 2013, with a view to ensuring complementarity of their respective roles in support of peacebuilding in Liberia. AfDB has also expressed an interest in collaborating with the Commission and the United Nations country team in Guinea in supporting national capacity development in the area of management of natural resources. The Commission also needs to further explore areas that could benefit from complementarity of funding between the Peacebuilding Fund and the AfDB Fragile States Facility, building on the lessons learned from initial Peacebuilding Fund investments in countries on the agenda and with a view to scaling up or replicating existing projects. Within the framework of agreed national priorities, the investments of AfDB could, where feasible, be designed to draw on or support the projects financed from the Peacebuilding Fund in order to ensure their complementarity and sustainability, an area to which the Commission could lend its support.

21. The efforts exerted by the Commission to engage and partner with foundations, philanthropic organizations and the private sector have to date been ad hoc and have thus not resulted in much success. The Commission recognizes that other actors need to be approached as potential partners whose investments could be channelled in such a way as to contribute to broader peacebuilding objectives in the countries concerned. During the reporting period, the Working Group on Lessons Learned initiated the discussion by exploring the characteristics and comparative advantage of philanthropic and non-governmental organizations and private corporations in support of peacebuilding-related activities and objectives. While the role of the Commission to advocate for the countries on its agenda remains the same, the way in which the Commission approaches different actors will vary from foundations to private companies. The Commission should also be prepared to

identify areas where it can offer concrete support to partnerships between the countries on the agenda and other actors. The Working Group concluded that the Commission could take the first step by identifying a few influential foundations and private companies in the areas of recurring priorities in the countries on the agenda and engage at the highest level of decision-making. A collective and strategic outreach and the advocacy efforts of the membership will be crucial in attracting the attention of these other actors.

C. Political accompaniment

22. It is increasingly noted that the Commission was designed for and is well placed to provide sustained attention and political accompaniment for countries on its agenda, beyond the span of attention of other actors. The 2010 review affirmed that countries on the agenda have experienced, to varying degrees, an increment of international attention as a result of engagement with the Commission, and that this is especially important for countries that can fairly be considered as not receiving the attention they need from the international community. The intergovernmental and representative nature of the Commission confers a degree of legitimacy on its political engagement at the country level. Political accompaniment, however, is derived from the ability of the Commission to engage in a constructive dialogue on commonly agreed peacebuilding priorities with national counterparts in the countries concerned. Therefore, political accompaniment is mainstreamed into the various functions undertaken by the Commission, from resource mobilization to advocacy, and from building partnerships to building coherence. Yet, the Commission has usually approached its crucial role in this area against the backdrop of a parallel role played by the most senior United Nations representative in the countries concerned where a peacekeeping or special political mission exists. The differentiation in nature and scope, as well as the potential areas of synergy and complementarity, between these parallel roles needs to be further clarified.

23. In Liberia, for example, the political accompaniment function of the Commission is undertaken in support of the plan of the Government to assume key responsibilities currently shouldered by UNMIL by the time of the withdrawal of the mission. In addition to support in the required hubs for access to security and justice services, the Commission is engaged in the priority area of national reconciliation and its related aspects of decentralization, electoral and constitutional reforms and the role of women as agents of change in Liberian society. The Commission is in the process of conceiving the type of support it can offer to the Government of Liberia in the priority area of national reconciliation, including through encouraging a consultative and inclusive process in terms of the engagement of key national institutions and the various regions within the country. Partnership with UNMIL and other operational actors at the country level will be crucial in ensuring that key messages and programmes are sufficiently coordinated and targeted. In Guinea, the Commission has helped the interim commission set up by President Condé to prepare recommendations for a national reconciliation process to mobilize the requisite expertise and financial resources, confirming the importance of the accompaniment function at the start-up and throughout a crucial political process.

24. In support of the electoral process in Sierra Leone, the Commission has seized opportunities presented by field visits and meetings in New York to convey the expectations of the international community for free, fair and peaceful elections to

all national stakeholders. In particular, the Commission urged political parties to maintain open dialogue, including with the independent institutions mandated to prepare the elections, with a view to bridging disagreements ahead of the elections. The Commission has also drawn on its convening power to seek support for these key messages and to encourage financing from the Peacebuilding Fund for projects implemented by UNIPSIL and aimed at building the capacity of non-state actors to undertake civic and electoral education and engage in conflict prevention initiatives. This process has culminated in the signing in May by all relevant actors of a declaration which outlines clear principles for political competition and encourages the political parties, the media and others to fully respect those principles.

25. While the political accompaniment by the Commission for the electoral process in Sierra Leone has benefited from an advanced degree of convergence among key international partners for the country, the divergence of views within the international community in response to the April coup d'état that disrupted the electoral process in Guinea-Bissau has rendered the task of the Commission in this regard considerably more challenging. The situation in Guinea-Bissau has also invited the question of how the Commission would assess the readiness of a country to be placed on the agenda of the Commission and also of when a country should remain on the agenda in situations of an unconstitutional change of Government that is disruptive of peacebuilding.

26. Political accompaniment could be further manifested in the extent to which critical peacebuilding priorities continue to be at the centre of attention in the country concerned. In Burundi, the annual review of the instrument of engagement continued to offer relevant stakeholders in Bujumbura a platform to address peacebuilding-related issues at the ministerial and ambassadorial level. In contrast, the case of the Central African Republic poses the question of the feasibility of an engagement in cases when it is difficult for the Government to secure a successor for a resigning chair of the country configuration and an outgoing national focal point. The interruption of the dialogue between the Commission and a country on its agenda, in particular when such interruption extends over a period of time, has an adverse effect on the ability of the Commission to assume its advisory role and to monitor progress or setbacks in the peacebuilding process.

27. The support to the planning process for the new poverty reduction strategy in Burundi presents another dimension of political accompaniment in the engagement of the Commission in the country. In addition, the support rendered to Burundi in the areas of socioeconomic reintegration of former combatants and other groups affected by the conflict, land issues, revenue collection and the fight against corruption are other examples of peacebuilding-related issues with a socioeconomic dimension. On some of these issues, the support provided by the Commission has been in the area of raising awareness of partners, encouraging national policy responses and highlighting visibility of good practices and achievements in areas such as revenue collection and lowering corruption.

D. Forging coherence

28. The 2010 review concluded that the international community still struggled to achieve the necessary degree of coherence in the field and the Commission must use its political weight to seek to align the various actors behind the nationally

identified peacebuilding strategies and priorities. In the various forums and debates since the review, there has also been convergence among Member States that forging coherence and improving the coordination of actors is a key function and expectation from the Commission, in particular in post-conflict countries where national coordination capacities are often minimal, ineffective or non-existing. For example, the Government of Guinea expects the Commission to address weak coordination, both among donors and within the Government of Guinea, noting that the priorities of both sides are yet to be aligned with the priorities in the statement of mutual commitments. The Commission, however, has yet to identify and develop the ideal mechanisms that will enable it to undertake this function and that are commensurate with its nature as an advisory, non-operational and New York-based body. Naturally, the effectiveness of the Commission in undertaking such a function hinges on the individual and collective efforts of its members and the willingness of partners, including the United Nations system, to coordinate their respective activities. The experience of the Commission to date has proven that, in certain situations, key partners in New York and in the field may, understandably, have different perspectives on how to respond to national needs and priorities. With this critical challenge in mind, the declaration adopted by the high-level event in September reaffirmed the commitment of members to strive for a sustained, coordinated and coherent response to peacebuilding needs through multilateral, regional and bilateral mechanisms that are aligned with nationally identified peacebuilding strategies and priorities.

29. During the reporting period, the Commission has placed due emphasis on improving coordination with the senior representatives of the United Nations in the countries on the agenda. Such emphasis responds to a key recommendation of the 2010 review. In this regard, the Chairs Group and a number of Special and Executive Representatives of the Secretary-General in countries on the agenda held an exploratory discussion in New York in May. The meeting recognized the need for the two sides to delineate and develop shared understandings of their respective comparative advantages, roles and responsibilities and of areas where the relations could be mutually reinforcing. This effort requires rigorous follow-up from the Commission in the months to come, including through proactive engagement with the Security Council and with the highest United Nations leadership.

30. The alignment of the instruments of engagement of the Commission with the activities of the United Nations in the field has proven helpful in facilitating a coherent approach to addressing identified priorities. For example, the contribution by UNMIL to the design and review of the statement of mutual commitments in Liberia has contributed to a relatively broader ownership of the activities of the Commission in the country. In Sierra Leone, the Commission has effectively supported the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and has helped to create the conditions for him to engage with the national Government and the United Nations family in one streamlined and integrated multi-year programme that is aligned with the national peace consolidation and development strategy. The Commission is expected to exercise its political leverage to ensure that the gains made in terms of United Nations integration and coherence can be sustained.

31. Another feature of the role of the Commission in fostering coherence is drawing on its efforts in building partnerships with the international financial institutions and AfDB. The alignment of the engagement by these partners around national strategies and priorities is an area where such partnerships could

demonstrate real added value for the countries on the agenda. In Burundi, the finalization of the second poverty reduction strategy in 2012 and the preparation of the Burundi partners conference in Geneva in October offered an opportunity for the Commission to encourage coordinated and consistent messages. The joint press release, issued in New York on 16 November following the Geneva conference by the main partners, namely the World Bank, AfDB, the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme, is an example of the efforts of the Commission to promote coherence of the respective cooperation programmes of these partners with the country.

32. The support of the Commission for improving coherence at the country level has also benefited from increased synergy between its instruments of engagement and the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund at the country level. In Liberia, the Joint Steering Committee in Monrovia, which has traditionally been responsible for reviewing the activities funded by the Fund, is considered as the counterpart of the Commission at the country level, thus encouraging key partners to focus on peacebuilding priorities, while positioning the contribution of the Fund within the broader peacebuilding funding efforts. The Peacebuilding Fund Joint Steering Committee in Guinea has coordinated the input of the Government of Guinea and the United Nations country team to the first review of the statement of mutual commitments, thus linking the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in the country. The Commission should consider ways to build on the successes of such initiatives and further empower them so as to lead to transparent mechanisms that strengthen coherence and national ownership.

E. Working methods

33. The 2010 review recalled the sense of the founding resolutions that the Peacebuilding Commission would be different from other United Nations bodies, namely, more flexible and innovative in its working methods, especially with a view to facilitating the contributions of a wide range of actors. Additionally, the review emphasized the need for a "whole of Peacebuilding Commission" view on a range of policy issues requiring collective consideration. At the same time, and in connection with the need to enhance the impact of the Commission in the field, the review also emphasized the need for the Commission to develop practical mechanisms which could help to feed and validate the work of the country configurations in New York. The reporting period has witnessed continued efforts to address these recommendations.

34. The Organizational Committee has streamlined its agenda to ensure a "whole of Peacebuilding Commission" approach to the implementation of the road map of actions in 2012. Meetings at the working level have been reintroduced with a view to deepening the engagement of member States and to allow for in-depth and detailed consideration of issues ahead of the formal meetings of the Committee. The Committee has shown the determination to remain the custodian of both the core mandates and the working methods of the Commission. In this regard, the Committee has initiated discussions on the first set of working methods related to options for the engagement of the Commission in countries on the agenda and the terms of reference for the work of country configurations and their Chairs at the country level. This work will help to clarify a number of important dimensions in which the Commission has developed experience and generated lessons learned. In

addition, generating and sustaining the interest and attention of national capitals and their engagement with the Commission represented a key challenge that the Committee has addressed on several occasions. In addition to the successful high-level event in September, the Committee is considering a suggestion to convene an annual session through which capital-based senior officials could engage in setting the policies and priorities of the Commission.

35. For country configurations, reducing the frequency of meetings at Headquarters while deepening the discussions on critical country-specific issues has been a key result in configurations which have either introduced an informal steering group or which have primarily conducted their work at the working level. Informal steering groups and working-level discussions help to deepen the engagement of member States and allow for in-depth and detailed consideration of issues ahead of meetings of whole configurations and principal level meetings.

36. The majority of the work of the Liberia configuration has been pursued through an informal steering group, with a membership that was willing and prepared to assume specific tasks and responsibilities. The meetings of the informal steering group have benefited from regular communications with actors in the field and by allowing members to exchange views and engage in informal analysis of the topics under consideration. The transaction costs of the Burundi configuration have been kept minimal with only one formal meeting of the configuration and most of the work being undertaken through an informal steering group, which has been effective in following up on issues, keeping members engaged at the ambassadorial level and having much more intense discussions with the Government of Burundi on sensitive issues. The approach of the Sierra Leone configuration has been similar and has reserved principal-level meetings for taking formal decisions or addressing particularly important issues. The work of the configuration has been conducted in close partnership between the Chair (Canada) and the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone. The Chair has also engaged bilaterally with a number of Member States on issues for which it was particularly well positioned. Otherwise, most of the work of the configuration has been conducted at the working level, which has also allowed for more frequent interactions with United Nations officials based in Freetown, including through videoconferences and regular encounters during visits to New York.

37. The former Chair of the Central African Republic configuration had convened weekly meetings of a small number of key United Nations actors in the three priority areas for peacebuilding in the country. While these meetings have been suspended since the resignation of the Chair of the configuration, the informal meetings were useful in maintaining the attention of the United Nations system on the Central African Republic, beyond the less frequent meetings of the Commission. The informal and more compact nature of this mechanism, complementing the full configuration meetings, enabled more targeted discussions resulting in more specific and concrete steps on the way forward.

38. The Guinea-Bissau configuration has also introduced an innovative approach through which it has drawn on the inputs from an independent panel of experts who had met ahead of a meeting of the configuration to address the situation in the country.

39. The Working Group on Lessons Learned has placed less emphasis on meetings and discussions at Headquarters and has prioritized a well-designed and extensively

researched preparatory process supported by field actors. In this regard, the Working Group has increasingly reached out to practitioners, as well as relevant United Nations operational entities, with a view to drawing on existing and evolving thinking on the topics under consideration. Through such an approach to its working methods, the Working Group has gradually enhanced its relevance for the work of the Commission at the country level. It is also considering ways in which to link the work undertaken by the Working Group to the field, including by holding a joint thematic workshop, together with the Chair of the country concerned, on the margin of field visits by the configuration or its Chair.

40. Going forward, the Commission will benefit from deeper and more active engagement from the representatives of the countries on the agenda. While some have been actively engaged and have contributed to the deliberations of the membership in country configurations, their engagement in broader policy discussions has not been consistent. The Commission needs to identify the means to facilitate the contribution of the countries on the agenda to discussions on mandates, partnerships and working methods.

F. Peacebuilding thematic issues

Economic revitalization: job creation

41. Employment of young people has been identified as a recurring peacebuilding priority for countries on the agenda of the Commission. The question of job creation has recently gained additional global attention and focus and there is increasing awareness that more coherent efforts by national and international actors are required. In this regard, the Commission needs to identify its niche in support of these efforts, whether by encouraging targeted short-term employment programmes or by promoting efforts aimed at boosting private sector growth and investment.

42. In countries on the agenda where a youth employment strategy is in place, the Commission is expected to mobilize broader international support for the implementation of the strategy through its advocacy function with major institutional partners and private investors. In Guinea, for example, the Commission has urged its members to support a project, led by the World Bank in partnership with the Government, which is aimed at the creation of 24,000 temporary jobs. A preliminary study is being conducted by the United Nations in partnership with other relevant international actors (notably the World Bank, AfDB and the European Union), funded by the Peacebuilding Fund.

43. The Commission can also lend its support to a nascent Global Facility for Employment Creation in Fragile Situations[1] that aims to strengthen the coordination and strategic direction of job creation efforts at a national level, among local actors and their international partners. Preliminary efforts have been made to expand the piloting of the work of this Facility to the countries on the agenda.

[1] An initiative of the World Bank Group, the African Development Bank, the International Labour Organization, the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Development Programme and the Peacebuilding Support Office.

National reconciliation

44. National reconciliation is drawing increasing attention as a cornerstone of sustainable peacebuilding. Liberia and Guinea have identified national reconciliation as key peacebuilding priorities for which they have sought support from the Commission.

45. In Liberia, for example, the Commission has supported the Government to prepare, in consultation with civil society, a strategic road map for national healing, peacebuilding and reconciliation, which is now being used as the main reference framework on all issues relating to reconciliation. An inclusive process for the validation of the road map is under way and is receiving particular focus by the Commission. In Guinea, the Commission has combined short-term and longer-term actions in its approach. In the short term, the Commission has advocated for a consensus on issues relating to the organization of parliamentary elections and for a coordinated response to the violence of 28 September 2009. In the longer term, the Commission has advocated for support by the United Nations and the international community to the national consultations that will define the content and the process of national reconciliation. A project to support these consultations is currently being finalized for funding by the Peacebuilding Fund.

Transition of United Nations missions in countries on the agenda of the Commission

46. Transition of United Nations missions has been closely linked to the work of the Commission. In paragraph 16 of the founding resolutions of the Commission (General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005)), the Assembly and the Council underlined that "in post-conflict situations on the agenda of the Security Council with which it is actively seized, in particular when there is a United Nations-mandated peacekeeping mission on the ground or under way and given the primary responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter, the main purpose of the Commission will be to provide advice to the Council at its request". In view of the envisaged drawdown of Security Council mandated missions in three countries on the agenda of the Commission, namely Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone, this will remain one of the central themes which the Commission will need to consider.

47. Decisions and timelines relating to the transition of missions are heavily influenced by conditions in the host country and by the views of host Governments. Consequently, such transitions are diverse and are specific to the individual context. An evolving United Nations policy on transition of missions and the lessons being learned in that regard, as well as initial consideration by the Commission through its Working Group on Lessons Learned, have confirmed five key principles which can be applied to all United Nations transitions:

(a) Transition planning must start early with national and international actors, must be aligned to national plans and must remain flexible throughout the transition process;

(b) Integration of the United Nations in the field is essential to help build national peacebuilding capacities and to prepare the reconfigured United Nations presence to support national actors in key peacebuilding objectives for the longer-term;

(c) National ownership is crucial for a successful transition process and national leaders must be involved in decision-making throughout, reflecting the needs of society;

(d) National capacity development is vital for the success of the mission and to ensure effective handover of peacebuilding tasks to national actors;

(e) Communication is critical to managing the expectations and anxieties of national stakeholders, United Nations staff and Member States.

48. Furthermore, continuing peacebuilding efforts throughout and beyond the lifespan of a United Nations mission requires sustained and aligned political and financial commitment by national and international actors. A major task to be undertaken jointly by the United Nations, the wider multilateral system and Member States is to ensure sustained support for national peacebuilding priorities. The Commission has the potential to be a key actor in this regard, in view of its mandate to help sustain the attention of the international community to long-term, post-conflict peacebuilding objectives.

49. During the reporting period, the Commission has been closely following the development of the first security and justice hub in Liberia, which is aimed at promoting decentralization of the security and justice functions needed to ensure a smooth transition of ownership from UNMIL to the Liberian authorities. In Burundi, the Commission has advocated for the inclusion of peacebuilding priorities in the second generation poverty reduction strategy, an essential step as the country envisages transition of the United Nations Office in Burundi to a United Nations resident coordinator presence. In Sierra Leone, the Commission supported the successful completion of the national elections on 17 November, which was considered a watershed for the transition process in the country. The added value of the Commission in the context of its advisory role to the Security Council has been explored by the Working Group and has been identified as follows:

(a) Promoting a more coherent understanding of short- and long-term peacebuilding objectives on the ground, thus ensuring sustainability of the engagement of the United Nations and other partners beyond the drawdown of the mission;

(b) Becoming a vehicle through which the views and perspectives of all relevant actors (national, international and the United Nations) are factored into Security Council decisions on transition and that these decisions are grounded in country-level realities;

(c) Advising the Security Council on national preparedness for assuming key functions performed by a mission with the support of development actors from within and outside the United Nations;

(d) Supporting the preparedness of the United Nations country team to respond to emerging challenges in post-mission scenarios by initiating an early analysis of critical national capacity gaps. This analysis could help to inform the design by the Council of the transition process and draw early attention to such gaps;

(e) Helping to mobilize partnerships, which could in turn help to address possible funding gaps following the drawdown and withdrawal of United Nations missions.

50. Going forward, the Commission will need to further deepen its partnership with development actors so as to provide advice to the Security Council in its deliberations on transition processes based on a longer-term perspective that captures lingering risks to peace consolidation.

III. Conclusions and agenda going forward

Role of the membership of the Peacebuilding Commission

51. The unique membership structure of the Commission should enable it to serve as a central platform for discussion, coordination and advice on peacebuilding within the United Nations system and beyond. In performing this role, the Commission faces the serious constraints of lacking a system-wide mandating authority and resources at its disposal. There is therefore an urgent need to renew the sense of collective responsibility and commitment from the individual members of the Commission, including from the countries on its agenda.

Actions

(a) The principles and objectives agreed in the declaration emanating from the high-level event on the topic "Peacebuilding: the way towards sustainable peace and security" should become a reference point for the positions of individual members of the Commission on peacebuilding-related policies at relevant United Nations and non-United Nations forums, as appropriate;

(b) Encourage Member States to voluntarily undertake specific tasks at the country-specific and policy levels of the work of the Commission, as identified by the Organizational Committee or the country configurations respectively.

Relations with principal organs of the United Nations

52. While the ability of the Commission to enhance its impact primarily depends on the level of commitment demonstrated by its individual members, the Commission must continue to demonstrate its niche and so build a reputation for adding value within the United Nations system. More precise guidance from the Security Council about the nature of advice required would also be of help.

Actions

(a) The Organizational Committee, in particular through its seven members from the Security Council category, to consider taking forward ideas expressed at the Security Council debate and informal interactive dialogue of 12 and 13 July, as well as the meeting of the Working Group on Lessons Learned of 21 November;

(b) The Organizational Committee, in particular through its seven members from the Economic and Social Council category, to evaluate the practical benefits of jointly organized thematic debates on the engagement of the Commission with the countries on the agenda;

(c) The Organizational Committee, in particular through its seven members from the General Assembly category, to make recommendations on areas of practical engagement with the Assembly.

A practical approach to resource mobilization, partnerships and advocacy

53. The Commission is not endowed with its own financial resources and should be expected to help advocate for and marshal potential donors to provide financial and in-kind contributions for countries on its agenda. The ability of the Commission to fulfil this role has been made particularly difficult by the current international financial situation. The initial work undertaken during the reporting period on practical approaches to the role of the Commission in resource mobilization, as well as in forging partnerships with international financial institutes and other actors, needs to be taken forward and piloted at the country level. In particular, there is need to place particular emphasis on supporting the countries on the agenda to develop national systems that could help to attract sustainable financial and technical support.

Actions

(a) Engage foundations, philanthropic organizations and the private sector. Interested and willing members of the Commission need to be invited to provide guidance on how it could possibly utilize national networks and connections to link up with relevant foundations and private investors. The Commission also needs to explore drawing on expertise in this area from different entities in the United Nations system;

(b) Take forward the initial outcome of the mapping of resource flows and actors in Guinea, with a view to facilitating the eventual development by the Government of Guinea of its national aid management and coordination systems. Explore the possibility of conducting similar mapping exercises in other countries on the agenda;

(c) Follow-up with AfDB on joint initiatives to align the work of AfDB and the Commission behind nationally identified peacebuilding priorities in the Central African Republic, Guinea, Liberia and Burundi, as well as collaboration on specific peacebuilding priority themes for these countries;

(d) Follow-up with the World Bank on the opportunities for improved alignment of its respective engagement and collaboration at the field level. Drawing upon country-specific experience, identify specific examples of collaboration that could be further scaled-up and broadened;

(e) Draw lessons from the most recent resource mobilization exercises where the Commission has been involved and update the options paper prepared by the Peacebuilding Support Office in 2012 with a set of lessons and practices.

Forging coherence

54. The alignment of the instruments of engagement of the Commission with the activities of the United Nations and other partners in the field has proven very helpful in facilitating a coherent approach to addressing identified priorities. Moreover, existing coordination mechanisms which bring together the Government and its partners at the field-level provide possible entry points through which the Commission can contribute to coherence and coordination of actors and of resource allocation.

Actions

(a) Utilize the periodic reviews of the instruments of engagement to assess and report on the progress, or lack thereof, in the alignment of international assistance behind national priorities at the country level;

(b) Follow-up on the initial outcome of the dialogue with the Special and Executive Representatives of the Secretary-General in the countries on the agenda with a view to improving clarity on the division of roles and responsibilities in supporting the peacebuilding processes;

(c) Assess the utility of preliminary efforts to engage with Headquarters level coordination (e.g., integrated task forces, Senior Peacebuilding Group) and explore with United Nations lead operational entities ideas aimed at strengthening the flow of information and at facilitating country-specific dialogue.

Working methods

55. The ongoing improvement and further development of the working methods of the Commission will enhance efficiency and credibility in conducting its work. There is a need to build on progress made during the reporting period in enhancing the role of the Organizational Committee and the Chairs Group in ensuring a "whole of the Peacebuilding Commission" approach to its work. There is also a need to continue to focus on further improvements in specific areas.

Actions

(a) Consider the development of practical and country-specific tools to assess impacts and measure results through the periodic reviews of the instruments of engagement, including by measuring the extent to which mutual commitments are honoured;

(b) Consider options for modalities of engagement that are adapted to emerging needs in countries on its agenda, as well as to countries that may be referred for advice in the future;

(c) Consider practical mechanisms to facilitate periodic interactions among all configurations with a view to identifying common challenges, facilitate cross-learning and generate deeper interest and commitment among the wider membership;

(d) Consider further mechanisms to make Headquarters meetings more flexible. This could include a more predictable meeting calendar, reduced meeting length and better use of electronic information-sharing tools;

(e) Intensify efforts to identify standing mechanisms through which the Commission can link its activities to those of bilateral, multilateral and regional actors in the field (e.g., enhanced use of joint steering committees);

(f) Develop a communications strategy aimed at ensuring greater visibility, explaining what the Commission can offer and disseminating awareness about peacebuilding efforts and challenges in countries on its agenda;

(g) Draw on the initial consideration of part I of the compendium on working methods with a view to further develop a set of practices and methods to enhance the effectiveness of and facilitate the engagement of Member States in the work of the Commission.

Peacebuilding thematic issues

56. The Commission will continue to expand its knowledge on key peacebuilding thematic issues in which it can provide added value, either in the context of its country-specific role or its institutional advisory role. Drawing on its engagement in countries on its agenda, the Commission intends to place particular emphasis on the recurring priority areas of (a) economic revitalization, with particular focus on job creation; and (b) national reconciliation.

Actions

Economic revitalization: job creation

(a) Draw on country-specific engagement in order to identify a practical approach to supporting job creation (e.g., through private sector engagement and sector-specific support in countries on its agenda);

(b) Continue the engagement with the World Bank, AfDB and the Peacebuilding Support Office with a view to encouraging the piloting of the Global Facility on Employment Creation in Fragile Situations support to job creation in Burundi, Guinea and Liberia;

(c) Explore and identify a practical approach for promoting South-South and triangular cooperation in support of job creation and employment generation in countries on the agenda.

National reconciliation

(a) Continue support to the national reconciliation process in the context of the implementation of the statements of mutual commitments with Guinea and Liberia;

(b) Draw upon the ongoing support to national reconciliation processes in Guinea and Liberia with a view to identifying lessons learned and define the main features of its role in this thematic area.